

Hypernormalization and Addiction

12/13/23

Live Webinars Supporting
5-Actions Programs™

John Fitzgerald, PhD, LPC, CAS
Digital Therapeutics Group, LLC



Agenda:

- Define what is meant by the term hypernormalization
- Discuss how addiction in its different forms can become an adaptive response to hypernormalization
- Explore how Hemisphere Theory contributes to understanding our present experiences in the world
- Discuss why this all matters...

New Mexico 5-Actions Programs™

- **Self-guided roadmap** to understanding and addressing addiction (substance and behavioral)
- **Launched November 2020** in New Mexico
- **Mobile-friendly online platform**, free for all who sign up to use the program
- **Over 125+ videos**, screening tools, and links to resources
- **24/7 phone support** from trained clinicians

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The screenshot shows the homepage of the New Mexico 5-Actions Program. At the top, the logo "New Mexico 5-Actions Program™" is displayed, along with navigation links: "How It Works", "FAQ", "Media", "Webinars", "Contact", "My Dashboard", and "My Account". A phone icon and the number "24/7: 1-855-662-7474" are also present. The main heading reads "Self-Guided Roadmap to Understanding and Addressing Pre-Addiction and Addiction". Below this is a video player showing a person using a smartphone. To the right of the video, text states: "The New Mexico 5-Actions Program™ is free, paid for by New Mexico Human Services Department, Behavioral Health Services Division." and a "HOW IT WORKS" button. The bottom section is titled "Powerful Tools To Support You On Your Journey" and features a central smartphone displaying a "What You Will Do" section with three bullet points: "Learn about addiction, treatment, and how people successfully change", "Explore your own behaviors, and identify powerful leverage points for change", and "Assess all your own addictions and co-occurring mental health issues". Surrounding the smartphone are six icons with labels: "24/7 phone support", "Substance & behavioral", "Over 6 hours of video", "COVID specific resources", "Tools to help loved ones", and "Evidence-based tools".

NM 5-Actions Program and NMCAL



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Download the NMConnect smartphone app for the easiest way to get help and access resources 24/7. Designed for all New Mexicans, NMConnect is here to provide people with access by engaging them with immediate access to mental health professionals and resources.

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<https://nmcrisisline.com>

5-Actions Program™ Webinars

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- **Guest experts** from the community with lived experience and working as professionals
- **Community discussion** where you can ask questions and connect with speakers

<https://5actionswebinars.com>

Ideas for 2024?

An Interesting Article!



“It’s a surreal feeling to bear witness to the world’s horrors while remembering to buy milk on your way home.”



nerve haver

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history books never prepared me for how surreal it is to have to continue with the minutiae of daily life no matter how cataclysmic the news gets, how twisted the fabric of society becomes, or how monstrously those around us behave

3:27 PM · Mar 27, 2023



33.5K



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<https://junkee.com/longform/mundane-tasks-world-ending-hypernormalisation>

Strange New Word



“Hypernormalization” is a word that was coined by a brilliant Russian historian who was writing about what it was like to live in the last years of the Soviet Union. What he said, which I thought was absolutely fascinating, was that in the 80s everyone from the top to the bottom of Soviet society knew that it wasn’t working, knew that it was corrupt, knew that the bosses were looting the system, knew that the politicians had no alternative vision. And they knew that the bosses knew that they knew that. Everyone knew it was fake, but because no one had any alternative vision for a different kind of society, they just accepted this sense of total fakeness as normal. And this historian, Alexei Yurchak, coined the phrase “Hypernormalisation” to describe that feeling.

Adam Curtis

Strange New Word



ADAM CURTIS

HYPERNORMALISATION

WELCOME TO THE POST-TRUTH WORLD

Adam Curtis

1987

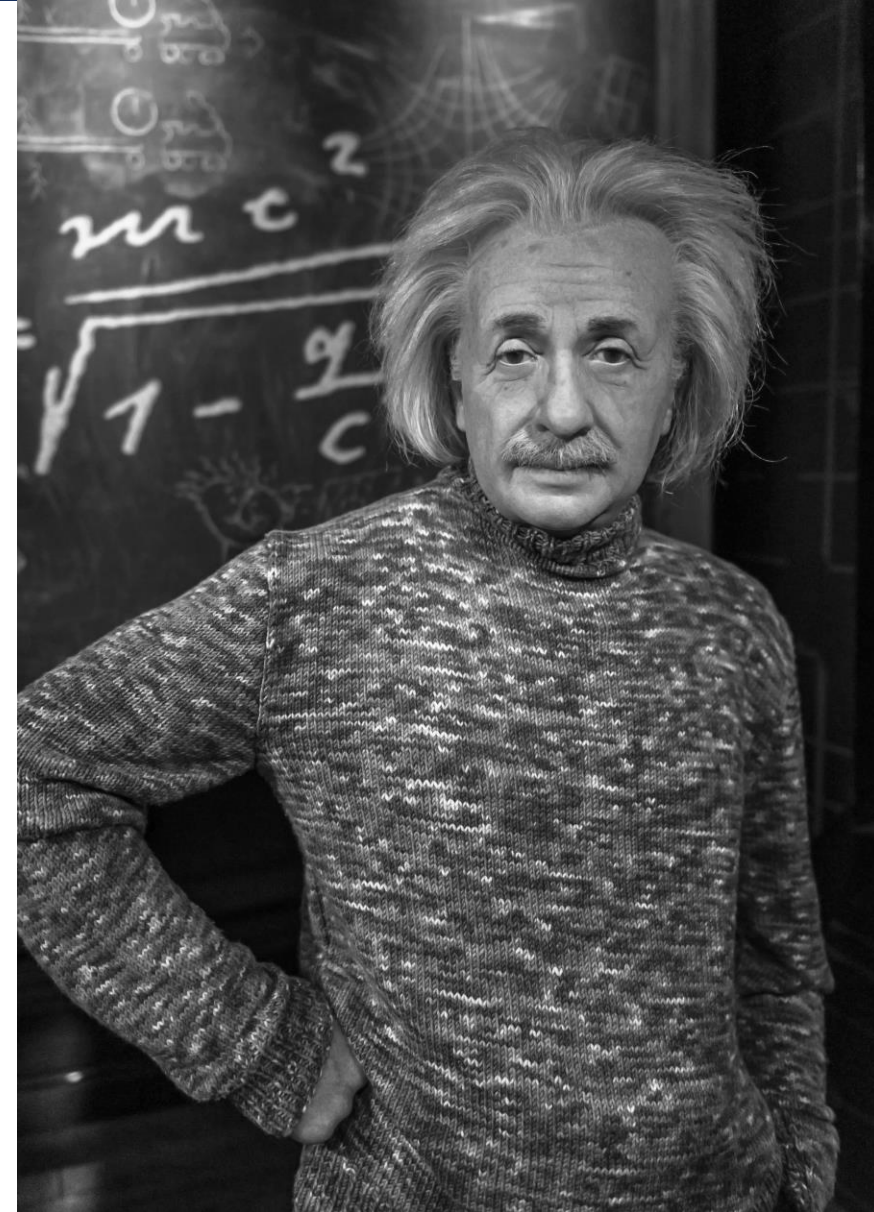


- Soviet Union was in decline
- Mikhail Gorbachev was head of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and attempted to implement reforms through dual policies of "perestroika," or economic restructuring, and "glasnost," or political openness
- 1991 - Soviet Union collapses

Question Everything

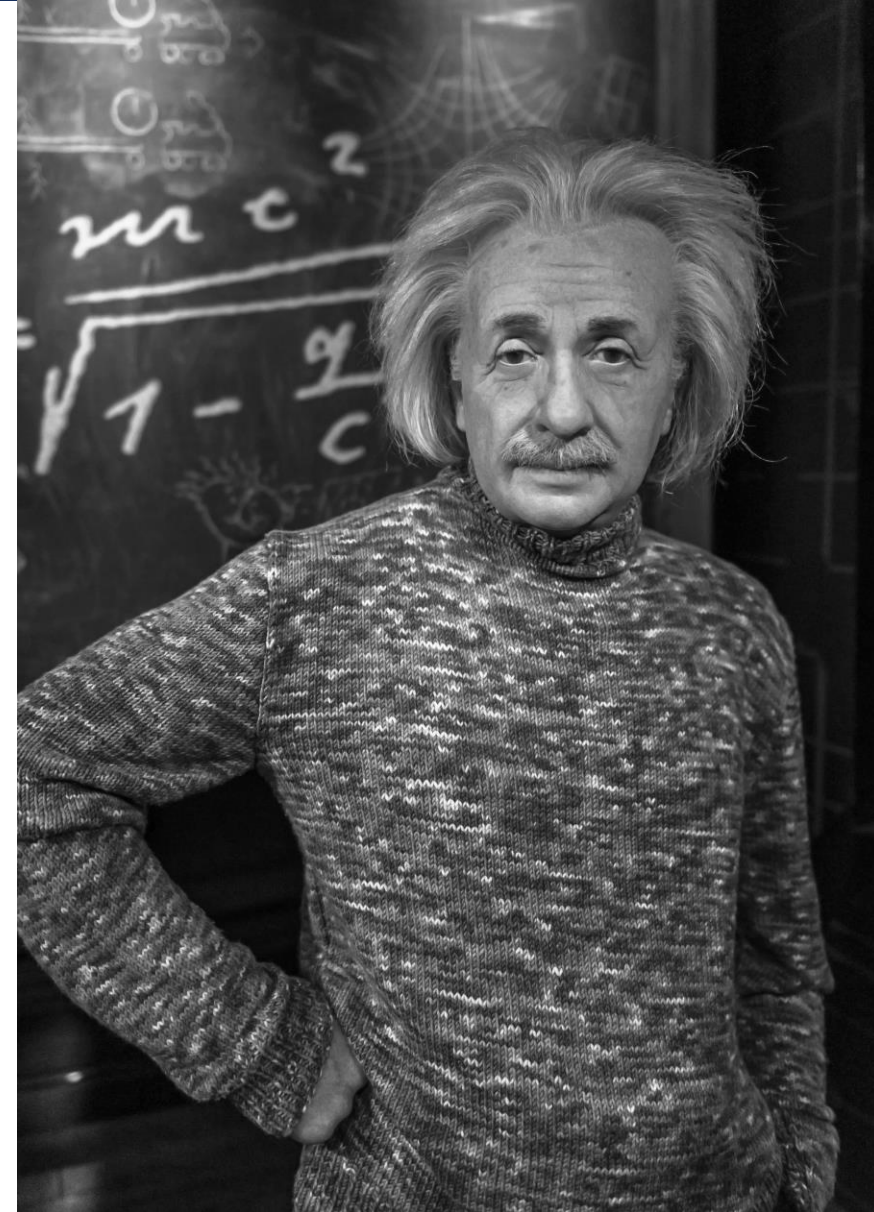
“The important thing is to never stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.”

Albert Einstein



Question Everything

1. Are we living in a hypernormalized state?
2. If so, how does that state influence addictive behavior?
3. So what?



Hypernormalization Today?



Africa

The UN system plays a crucial role in coordinating assistance of all kinds — to help Africa help itself. From promoting the development of democratic institutions, to the establishment of peace between warring nations, the UN is present on the ground supporting economic and social development and the promotion and protection of human rights.



Ageing

The world's population is ageing: virtually every country in the world is experiencing growth in the number and proportion of older persons in their population. The number of older persons, those aged 60 years or over, has increased substantially in recent years in most countries and regions, and that growth is projected to accelerate in the coming decades.



AIDS

New HIV infections have fallen by 35% since 2000 (by 58% among children) and AIDS-related deaths have fallen by 42% since the peak in 2004. The global response to HIV has averted 30 million new HIV infections and nearly 8 million AIDS-related deaths since 2000. The UN family has been in the vanguard of this progress.



Atomic Energy

More than 30 countries worldwide are operating 444 nuclear reactors for electricity generation and 66 new nuclear plants are under construction. In 2014, 13 countries relied on nuclear energy to supply at least one-quarter of their total electricity.



Big Data for Sustainable Development

The volume of data in the world is increasing exponentially. New sources of data, new technologies, and new analytical approaches, if applied responsibly, can allow to better monitor progress toward achievement of the SDGs in a way that is both inclusive and fair.



Child and Youth Safety Online

Rising Internet connectivity has the potential to transform children and young people's lives for the better, but also makes them vulnerable to sexual abuse, cyberbullying, and other risks. The UN is actively working to protect children and youth online through various programmes and initiatives.



Children

Every child has the right to health, education and protection, and every society has a stake in expanding children's opportunities in life. Yet, around the world, millions of children are denied a fair chance for no reason other than the country, gender or circumstances into which they are born.



Climate Change

Climate change is one of the major challenges of our time. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale.



Decolonization

The wave of decolonization, which changed the face of the planet, was born with the UN and represents the world body's first great success. As a result of decolonization many countries became independent and joined the UN.



Democracy

Democracy is a universally recognized ideal and is one of the core values and principles of the United Nations. Democracy provides an environment for the protection and effective realization of human rights.



Disarmament

Since the birth of the United Nations, the goals of multilateral disarmament and arms limitation have been central to the Organization's efforts to maintain international peace and security.



Ending Poverty

While pre-pandemic global poverty rates had been cut by more than half since 2000, the COVID-19 pandemic could increase global poverty by as much as half a billion people or 8% of the total human population.



Food

The world is not on track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, Zero Hunger by 2030. The food security and nutritional status of the most vulnerable population groups is likely to deteriorate further due to the health and socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Gender Equality

Women and girls represent half of the world's population and, therefore, also half of its potential. Gender equality, besides being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieve peaceful societies, with full human potential and sustainable development.



Health

The United Nations, since its inception, has been actively involved in promoting and protecting good health worldwide. Leading that effort within the UN system is the World Health Organization (WHO), whose constitution came into force on 7 April 1948.



Human Rights

Promoting respect for human rights is a core purpose of the United Nations and defines its identity as an organization for people around the world. Member States have mandated the Secretary-General and the UN System to help them achieve the standards set out in the [UN Charter](#) and the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).



International Law and Justice

The UN continues to promote justice and international law across its three pillars of work: international peace and security, economic and social progress and development, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.



International migration

Since the earliest times, humanity has been on the move. Today, more people than ever before live in a country other than the one in which they were born.



Oceans and the Law of the Sea

Life itself arose from the oceans. The ocean is vast, some 72 per cent of the earth's surface. Not only has the oceans always been a prime source of nourishment for the life it helped generate, but from earliest recorded history it has served for trade and commerce, adventure and discovery.



Peace and Security

Saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war was the main motivation for creating the United Nations, whose founders lived through the devastation of two world wars.



Population

In 1950, five years after the founding of the United Nations, world population was estimated at around 2.6 billion people. It reached 5 billion in 1987 and 6 in 1999. In October 2011, the global population was estimated to be 7 billion.



Refugees

There were 89.3 million people forcibly displaced world-wide at the end of 2021. Among those were 27.1 million refugees, half under the age of 18 (21.3 million refugees under UNHCR's mandate, and 5.8 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate).



Water

Fresh water sustains human life and is vital for human health. There is enough fresh water for everyone on Earth. However, due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, millions of people (most of them children) die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene.



Youth

As youth are increasingly demanding more just, equitable and progressive opportunities and solutions in their societies, the need to address the multifaceted challenges faced by young people (such as access to education, health, employment and gender equality) have become more pressing than ever.

Hypernormalization Today?

Africa
The UN system also a crucial role in providing assistance of all kinds – to help Africa help itself. From promoting the development of democratic institutions, to the establishment of peace-keeping missions, the UN is present in the varied situations economic and social development and the promotion and protection of human rights.

Ageing
The world's population is ageing, especially more quickly in the world's developing countries. In the number and percentage of older persons in their population. The number of older persons above age 60 years or over has increased substantially in recent years in most countries and regions, and that growth is projected to accelerate in the coming decades.

AIDS
New HIV infections have fallen by 35% since 2010 for 195 developing countries and AIDS-related deaths have fallen by 45% since the peak in 2004. The global response to HIV has averted 32 million new HIV infections and saved 5 million AIDS-related deaths since 2010. The UN family has been at the forefront of this progress.

Atomic Energy
More than 20 countries worldwide are operating 444 nuclear reactors. The electricity generation and 44 new nuclear plants are under construction. In 2014, 11 countries relied on nuclear energy to supply at least one-quarter of their total electricity.

Big Data for Sustainable Development
The volume of data in the world is increasing exponentially. New sources of data, new technologies and new analytical approaches. It enables organisations and other to gather, monitor, analyse and use data to improve their performance and efficiency.

Child and Youth Safety Online
Young internet users are not the general population. Children and young people's lives are changing, but also making them vulnerable to sexual abuse, grooming, and other risks. The UN is actively working to protect children and youth online through various programmes and initiatives.

Children
Every child has the right to healthy, nutritious and protective care every day. Every child has a right to expanding children's opportunities in life. For around the world, millions of children are denied a fair chance for an education that is necessary to turn them into contributors into which they are born.

Climate Change
Climate change is one of the major challenges of our time. From manifesting weather patterns that threaten food production to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale.

Decolonization
The wave of decolonization, which changed the face of the planet, was born with the UN and represents the world's first great success. As a result of decolonization many nations became independent and joined the UN.

Democracy
Democracy is a universally recognized ideal and a core of the core values and principles of the United Nations. Democracy provides an environment for the promotion and effective realization of human rights.

Disarmament
Since the birth of the United Nations, the goals of multilateral disarmament and arms reduction have been central to the Organization's efforts to maintain international peace and security.

Ending Poverty
While pre-pandemic global poverty rates had been on a downward trend since 2000, the COVID-19 pandemic could increase global poverty by as much as half a billion people, or 1% of the world's human population.



Food
The world is set on track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2, Zero Hunger, by 2030. The food security and nutritional status of the most vulnerable population groups is likely to improve further due to the health and socio-economic progress of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gender Equality
Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore, also half of its potential. Gender equality remains being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieve sustainable societies, with full human potential and sustainable development.

Health
The COVID-19 pandemic has been an excellent opportunity to improve global health. Looking into efforts within the UN system is the World Health Organization (WHO), whose constitution came into force on 7 April 1948.

Human Rights
Promoting respect for human rights is a core objective of the United Nations and defines its identity as an organization for people around the world. Member States have reinforced the Secretary-General and the UN System to help them achieve the mandate set out in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

International Law and Justice
The UN continues to promote justice and international law through its three pillars of work: international peace and security, economic and social progress and development, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

International Migration
Since the earliest times, humans have been on the move. Today, more people migrate than ever, but a question remains: how to do it in a way that is safe and dignified.

Oceans and the Law of the Sea
UN itself came from the oceans. The ocean is our "water 70 per cent of the earth's surface, but only has the thinnest. It's a source of life and a source of inspiration for the UN. It's a source of life and a source of inspiration for the UN. It's a source of life and a source of inspiration for the UN.

Peace and Security
Strong, successful governance from the top-down has been the main motivation for creating the United Nations, under Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, the UN's first Secretary-General, and from the first Secretary-General, it has served for peace and economic, social and development.

Population
In 1950, five years after the founding of the United Nations, world population was estimated at around 2.5 billion people. It reached 5 billion in 1987 and 6 billion in October 2011. The global population was estimated to be 7 billion.

Refugees
There were 80.7 million people forcibly displaced worldwide at the end of 2021. Among those were 27.1 million refugees, 19.9 million internally displaced persons under UNHCR's mandate and 33.6 million Palestinian refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

Water
Fresh water sustains human life and is vital for human health. There is enough fresh water for everyone on Earth. However, due to fast population growth and intensive agriculture, millions of people around the world do not have access to clean water. This is a major challenge for the UN system, especially with increasing water scarcity, pollution and climate change.

Youth
As youth are increasingly demanding more jobs, sustainable and progressive opportunities and solutions in their societies, the need to address the multifaceted challenges faced by young people such as access to education, health, employment and gender equality's have become more pressing than ever.

Hypernormalization Today?



Hypernormalization Today?

Working

Binging Netflix

Eating

Internet Surfing

Shopping

Cleaning

Drinking

Gaming

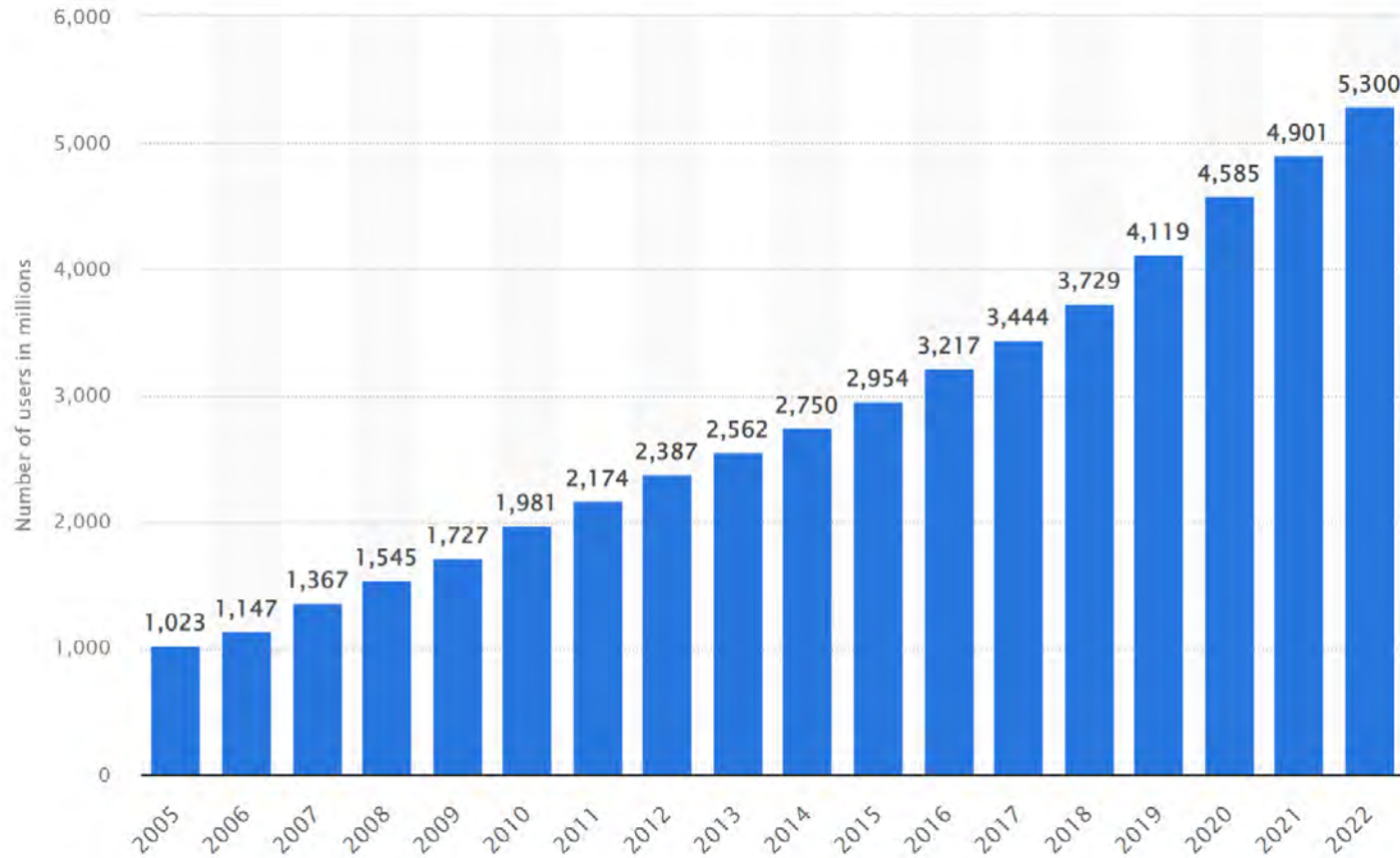
Driving Kids Around

Engaging Social Media



Rate of Change

Worldwide Internet Users



Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/273018/number-of-internet-users-worldwide/>

ChatGPT Sprints to One Million Users

Time it took for selected online services to reach one million users



* one million backers ** one million nights booked *** one million downloads
Source: Company announcements via Business Insider/LinkedIn



statista

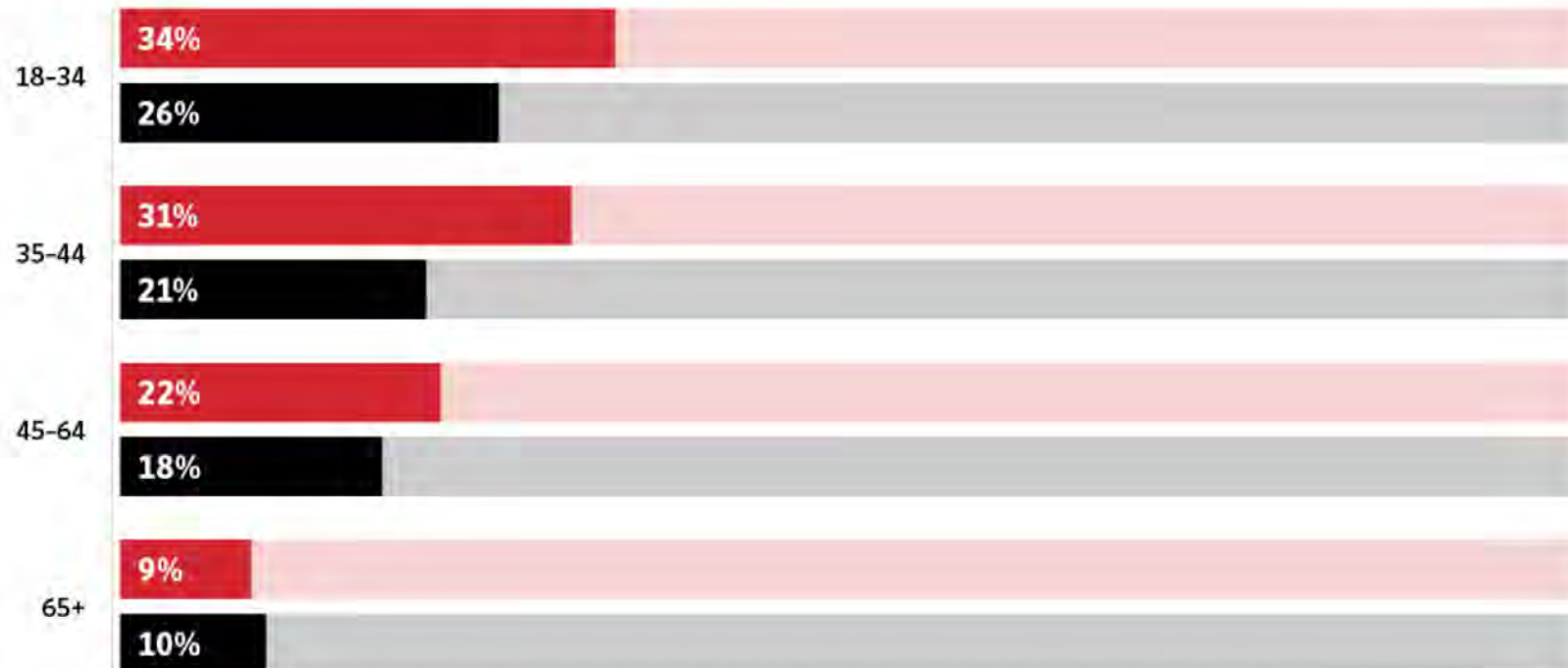
Stress in America: APA 2023 Report



PRE- AND POST-PANDEMIC STRESS LEVEL COMPARISON BY AGE

% OF ADULTS WHO RATE THEIR AVERAGE STRESS BETWEEN EIGHT AND TEN*

■ 2023 ■ 2019



*Respondents were asked to rate their average level of stress during the past month on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means "little or no stress" and 10 means "a great deal of stress"

Stress in America: APA 2023 Report

EFFECTS OF STRESS

% STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT AGREE

THEY DON'T TALK ABOUT THEIR STRESS OVERALL BECAUSE THEY DON'T WANT TO BURDEN OTHERS



THEIR STRESS LEVEL HAD MADE THEM HAVE LESS PATIENCE FOR OTHERS



STRESS MAKES IT HARD FOR THEM TO FOCUS



MOST DAYS THEIR STRESS IS COMPLETELY OVERWHELMING



WHEN THEY ARE STRESSED, THEY CAN'T BRING THEMSELVES TO DO ANYTHING



THEY ARE SO STRESSED THEY FEEL NUMB

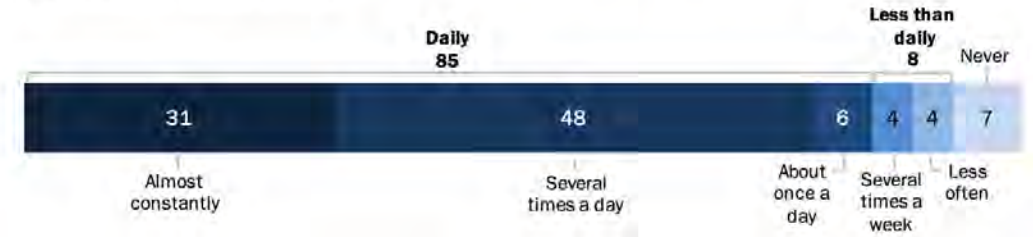


MOST DAYS THEY ARE SO STRESSED THEY CAN'T FUNCTION



More than eight-in-ten U.S. adults go online at least daily

% of U.S. adults who say they go online...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 25-Feb. 8, 2021.

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Betting His Legacy on Vision Pro



Betting His Legacy on Vision Pro



The metaverse promises to satisfy all needs for travel, learning, shopping, concerts, friends, and fun, shared experiences in a halcyon universe free of discord and travel delays. The goal is for the Metaverse to become our preferred place of residence, replacing the current way we use the online environment.

To those of us who like living in reality and have had a lifetime of experiences, Facebook/Meta's move is beyond bizarre.

Margaret Wheatley

Hypernormalization... and Addiction?

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
NIH Public Access
Author Manuscript
Eval Health Prof. Author manuscript; available in PMC. 2011 July 22.

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Eval Health Prof. 2011 March ; 34(1): 3–56. doi:10.1177/0163278710380124.

Prevalence of the Addictions: A Problem of the Majority or the Minority?

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²Psychology Division, Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, United Kingdom

Abstract

An increasing number of research studies over the last three decades suggest that a wide range of substance and process addictions may serve similar functions. The current article considers 11 such potential addictions (tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs, eating, gambling, Internet, love, sex, exercise, work, and shopping), their prevalence, and co-occurrence, based on a systematic review of the literature. Data from 83 studies (each study $n =$ at least 500 subjects) were presented and supplemented with small-scale data. Depending on which assumptions are made, overall 12-month prevalence of an addiction among U.S. adults varies from 15% to 61%. The authors assert that it is most plausible that 47% of the U.S. adult population suffers from maladaptive signs of an addictive disorder over a 12-month period and that it may be useful to think of addictions as due to problems of lifestyle as well as to person-level factors.

Keywords
addiction; prevalence; co-occurrence; comorbidity; behavioral addiction

Although often previously associated with physiological tolerance and withdrawal effects, the term “addiction” has achieved a broader definition (e.g., see www.dsm5.org; accessed on February 22, 2010; also Brewer & Potenza, 2008; Griffiths, 2005a; Marks, 1990; Orford, 2001; Schneider & Irons, 2001). Among many researchers and clinicians, “addiction” has come to refer to a disorder in which an individual becomes intensely preoccupied with a behavior that at first provides a desired or appetitive effect. The appetitive effect generally is equated with changes in firing in the mesolimbic dopaminergic system, but there are numerous brain neurotransmission and hormonal systems involved, including mu opioid, serotonin, norepinephrine, anandamide, and the hypothalamic-pituitary-axis (HPA), among others; associated with subjective reports of arousal, pleasure, or fantasy (Brewer & Potenza, 2008; Johansson, Grant, Kim, Odlaug, & Gotestam, 2009; Schneider & Irons, 2001; Volkov & Wise, 2005). The addictive behavior occurs with several pattern variations (e.g., bingeing or sustained preoccupation), but always repeatedly, involving a great deal of time thinking about and engaging in the behavior, which operates beyond the need to remove intense anxiety common in compulsive disorders (Brewer & Potenza, 2008; Marks, 1990).

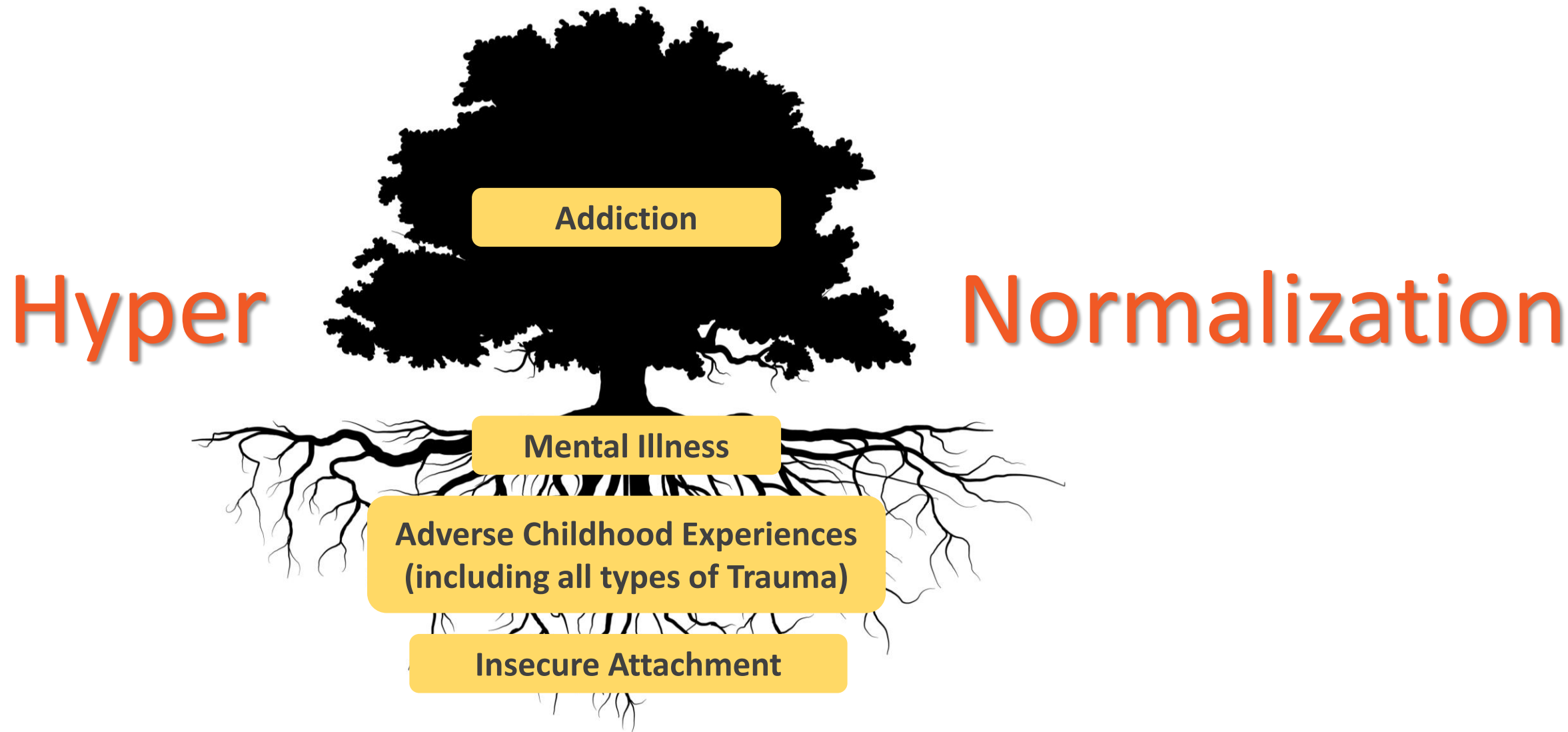
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Corresponding Author: Steve Sussman, Departments of Preventive Medicine and Psychology, Institute for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research, University of Southern California, 1000 S. Fremont Avenue, Unit 8, Bldg. A-6, Room 6129, Alhambra, CA 91803, USA, sussman@usc.edu
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The author(s) declared no conflicts of interest with respect to the authorship and/or publication of this article.

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- Likely that 47% of the U.S. population suffers from “maladaptive signs of an addictive disorder.”
- Because the universe of addiction is so broad and includes almost half of all adults, maybe we should think about addictions more as *lifestyle problems*

Addiction: Adaptive, Autoregulatory



Nitazene Analogues

Cureus

Open Access Review
Article

DOI: 10.7759/cureus.40736

Old Drugs and New Challenges: A Narrative Review of Nitazenes

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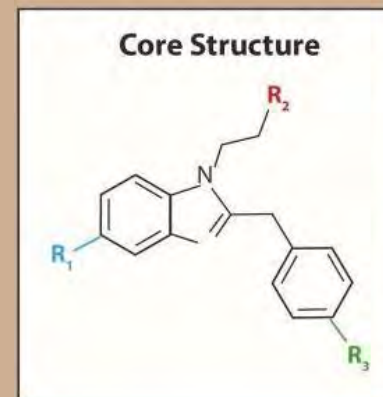
Pergolizzi Jr et al. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License CC-BY 4.0., which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Abstract

Nitazenes are a group of compounds developed in the 1950s as opioid analgesics, but they were never approved to market. As such, they are not well known outside of academic research laboratories. A characteristic of nitazenes is their high potency (e.g., hundreds to thousands fold more potent than morphine and other opioids and tenfold more potent than fentanyl). In the past few years, several nitazenes, including "designer analogs," have been detected in the illicit drug supply and have been implicated in overdose mortality, primarily due to their exceptionally high potency. In the street drug supply, nitazenes are often found mixed with fentanyl or other agents but their presence is not always disclosed to drug buyers, who may not even be familiar with nitazenes. These drugs pose a particular challenge since there is little experience in how to reverse a nitazene overdose or potential drug-drug or drug-alcohol interactions. Public health efforts are needed to better inform street drug consumers, first responders, healthcare professionals, and the general public about these "new old drugs" that are infiltrating the recreational drug supply.

Categories: Emergency Medicine, Family/General Practice, Pain Management

Keywords: designer drugs, addiction, opioid use disorder, opioids, street drugs, nitazenes

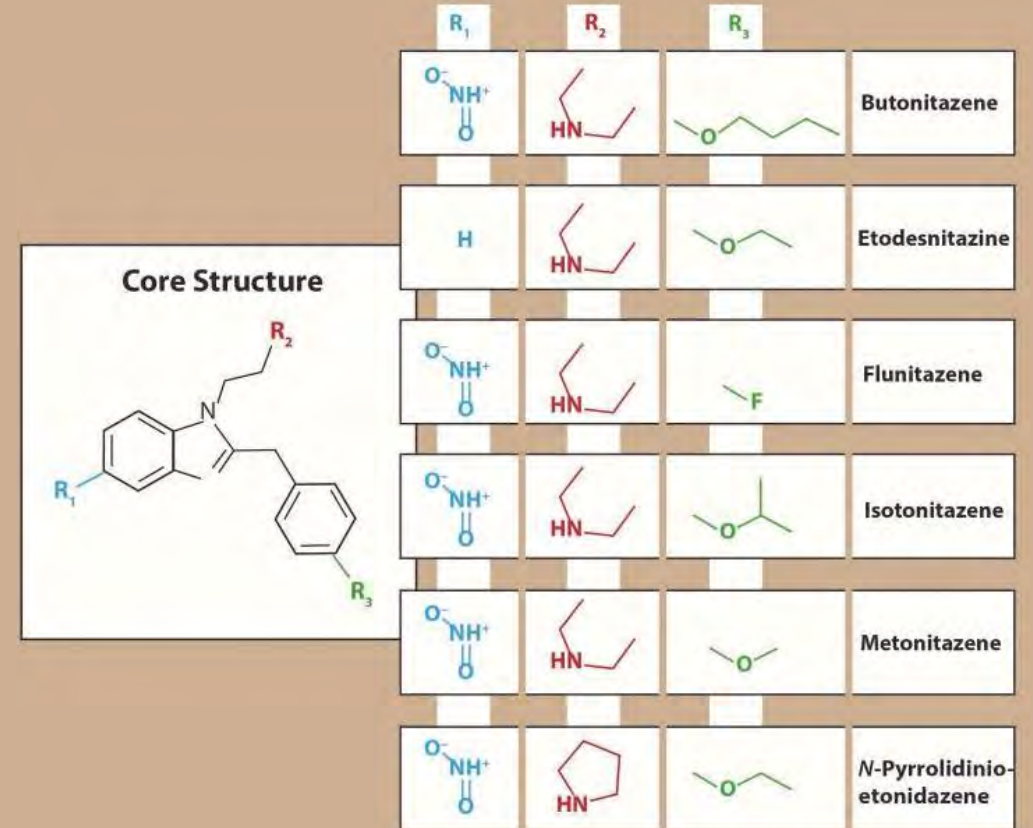


| R ₁ | R ₂ | R ₃ | Compound |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| | | | Butonitazene |
| H | | | Etodesnitazene |
| | | F | Flunitazene |
| | | | Isotonitazene |
| | | | Metonitazene |
| | | | N-Pyrrolidino- etonidazene |

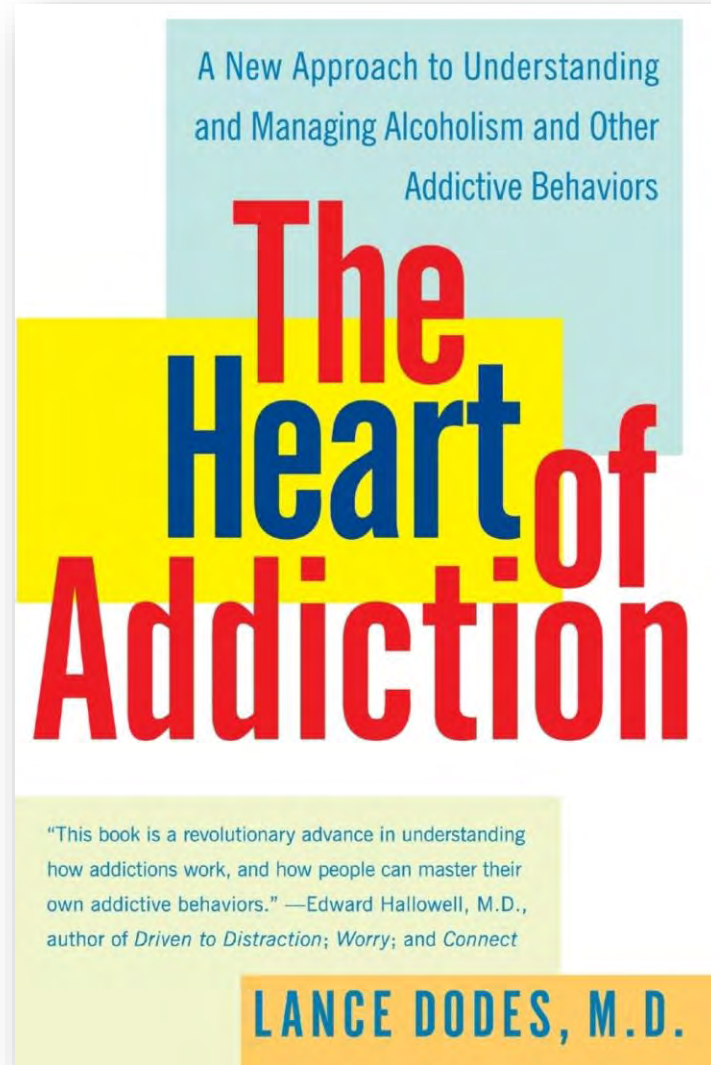
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10361140/>

Nitazene Analogues

- Nitazenes developed in the 1950s and never made commercially available
- Mimic the effects of natural opiates, and while structurally unrelated to fentanyl have similar or greater potency
- Entering illicit market due to pressure on China to stop making the precursors for fentanyl, and they are legal
- No test strips, in theory can be antagonized, not going away...



Addiction: Reversing Helplessness



Virtually every addictive act is preceded by a feeling of helplessness or powerlessness. Addictive behavior functions to repair this underlying feeling of helplessness. It is able to do this because taking the addictive action (or even deciding to take this action) creates a sense of being empowered, or regaining control – over one’s emotional experience and one’s life.

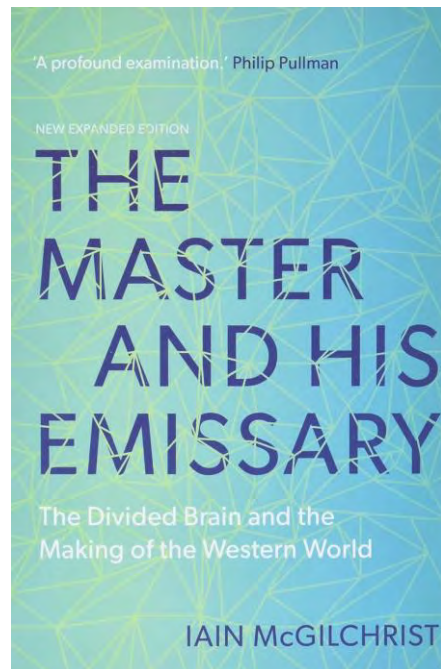
What's happening?



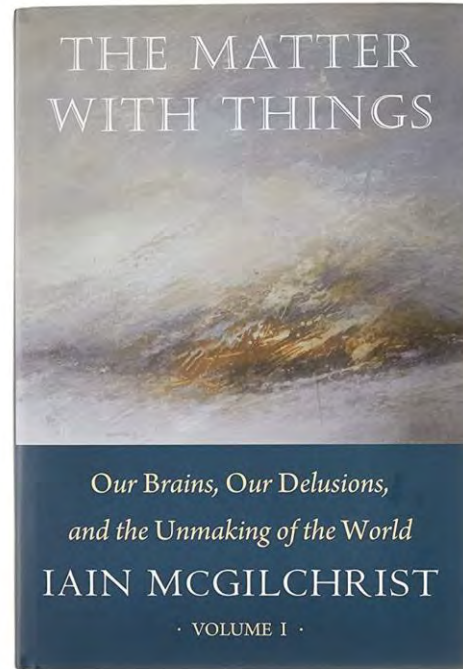
Dr. Iain McGilchrist



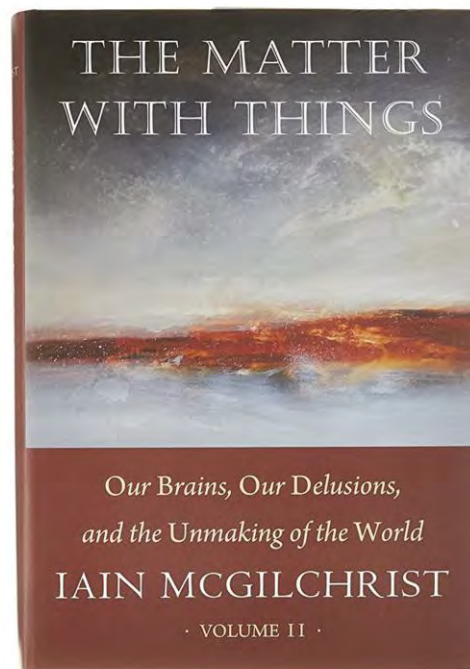
Dr. Iain McGilchrist



2009



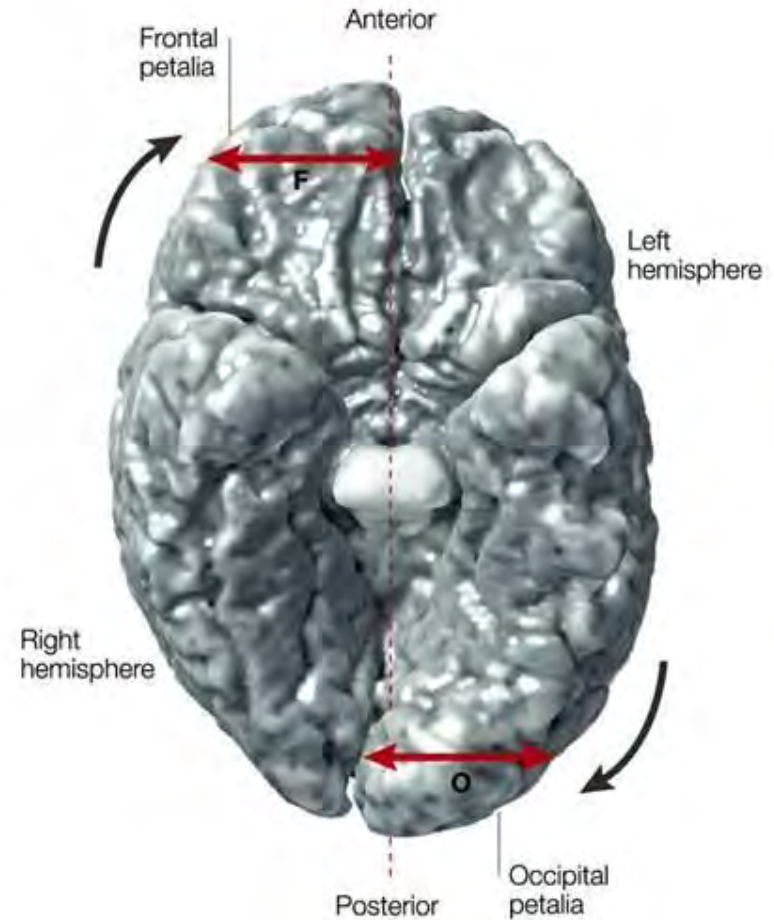
2021



Hemisphere Hypothesis

“My thesis is that for us as human beings there are two fundamentally opposed realities, **two different modes of experience**; that each is of ultimate importance in bringing about the recognisably human world; and that their difference is rooted in the bihemispheric structure of the brain. It follows that the **hemispheres need to cooperate**, but I believe they are in fact involved in a sort of power struggle, and that this explains many aspects of contemporary Western culture.”

Iain McGilchrist



Hemisphere Hypothesis

LEFT

RIGHT

certainty vs possibility

fixity vs flow

parts vs whole

explicit vs implicit

abstracted vs contextual

general vs unique

quantification vs qualification

inanimate vs animate

optimistic vs realistic

re-presented vs present



Source: lecture on YouTube - Perspectives on the Nature of Reality to Inform Systemic Change Dr Iain McGilchrist, CERN, Switzerland

The Matter With Things

“The single most profound difference between the hemispheres, which I will have cause to return to repeatedly, is the distinction between the **experience of something as it ‘presences’ to us in the right hemisphere, and as it is ‘re-presented’ to us in the left.** Just because we so rarely deal with the world nowadays except as it is represented, and because we are used to mistaking the representation for the thing itself, the full significance of this may not be apparent.”

“The best way I can put it is that it is the manner in which our consciousness is disposed towards whatever else exists. The choice we make of how we dispose our consciousness is the ultimate creative act: it renders the world what it is. **It is, therefore, a moral act: it has consequences.**”

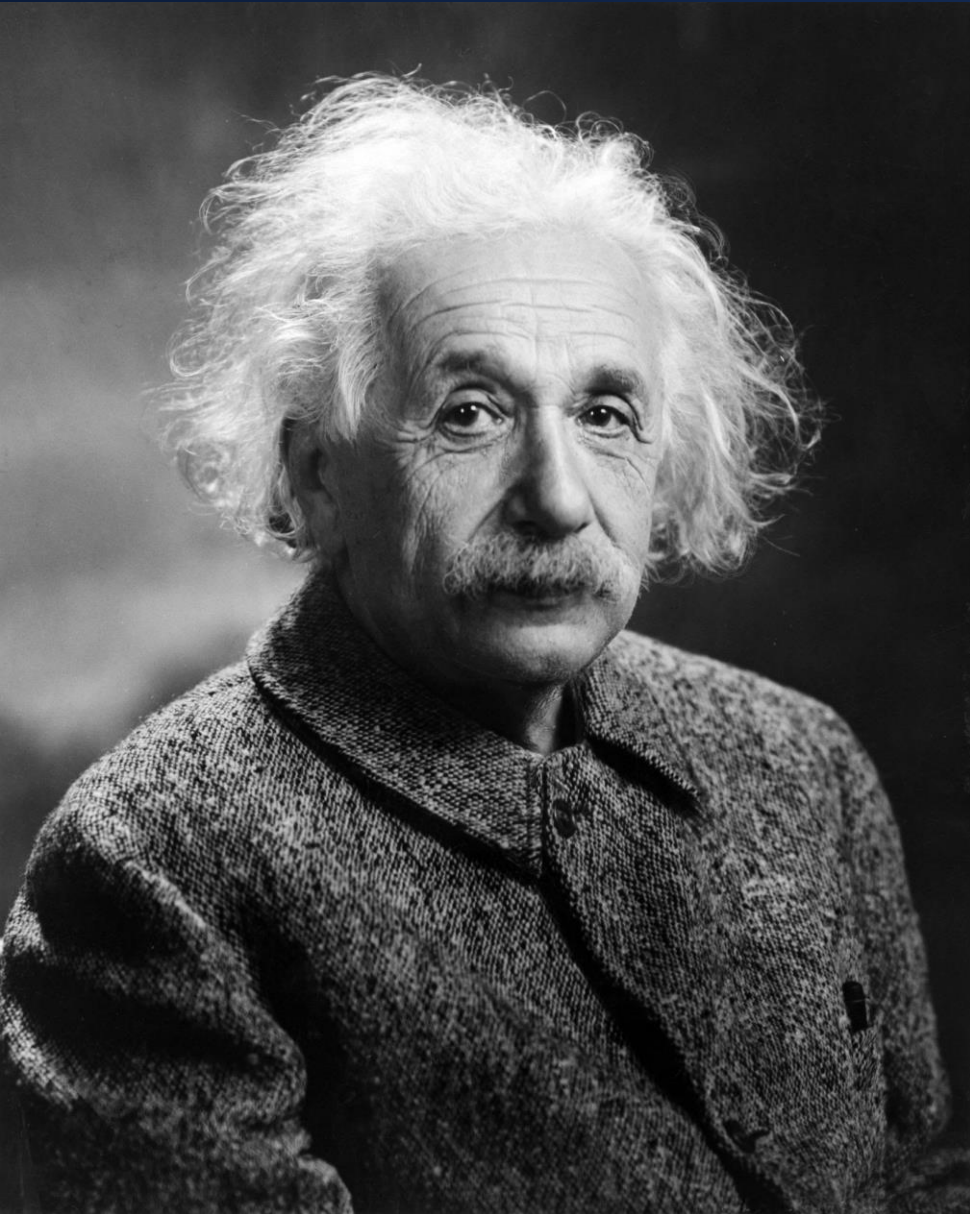
Consequences of hypernormalization, addiction, and LH master...

- We become deluded into living life as a **separate Self**, disconnected from everyone and everything else
- We live a life of (psychic/ego) parts, **disconnected from the flow of life**, from our true nature
- We seek solace from our isolation in short-lived fixes that **perpetuate suffering**

I do not really know if today's world is further from the truth than many civilizations that have preceded it. Yet so much of what occupies our attention is a fiction, and through these fictions we live a life of delusion, of separation, of selfishness, of loneliness.

*Kabir Helminski
The Knowing Heart*

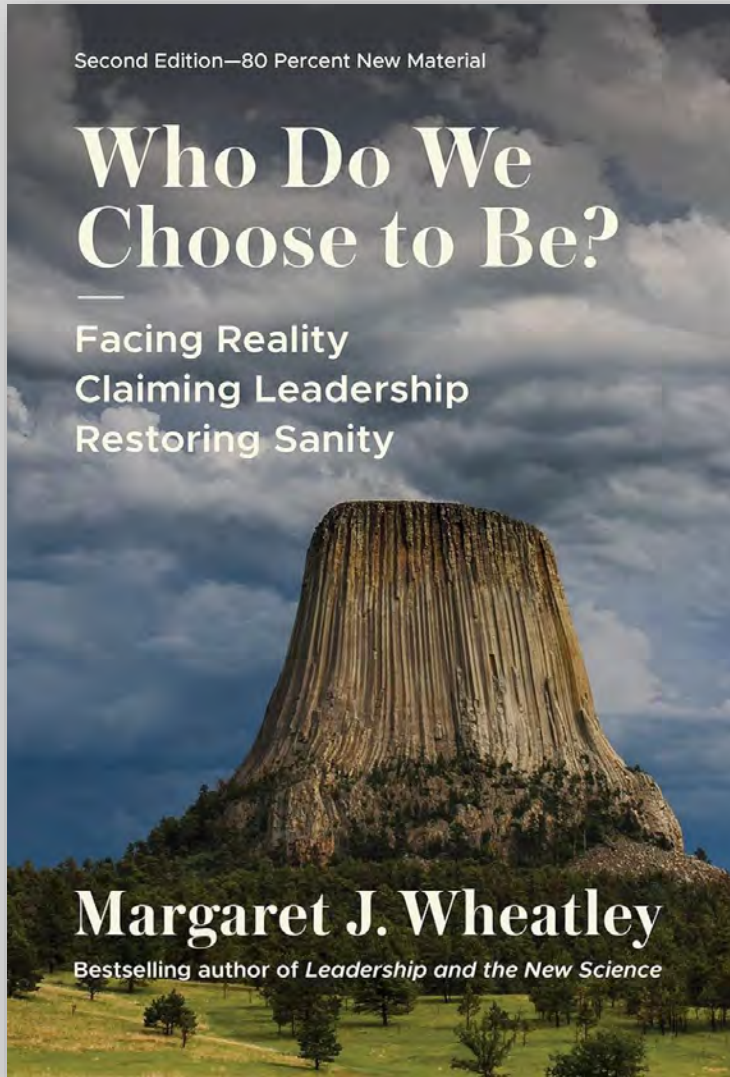
So what?



A human being is a part of the whole, called by us “Universe,” a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separate from the rest – a kind of **optical delusion of his consciousness**. The striving to free oneself from this delusion is the one issue of true religion. Not to nourish it but to try to overcome it is the way to reach the attainable measure of peace of mind.

Albert Einstein

Last of the Human Freedoms...



“Closing down or refusing to understand reality, pretending that nothing is happening, that we can proceed as we’ve always done – these are the behaviors of people gone mad. If we don’t open to our changing circumstances, if we don’t actively work with new information, death is assured.”

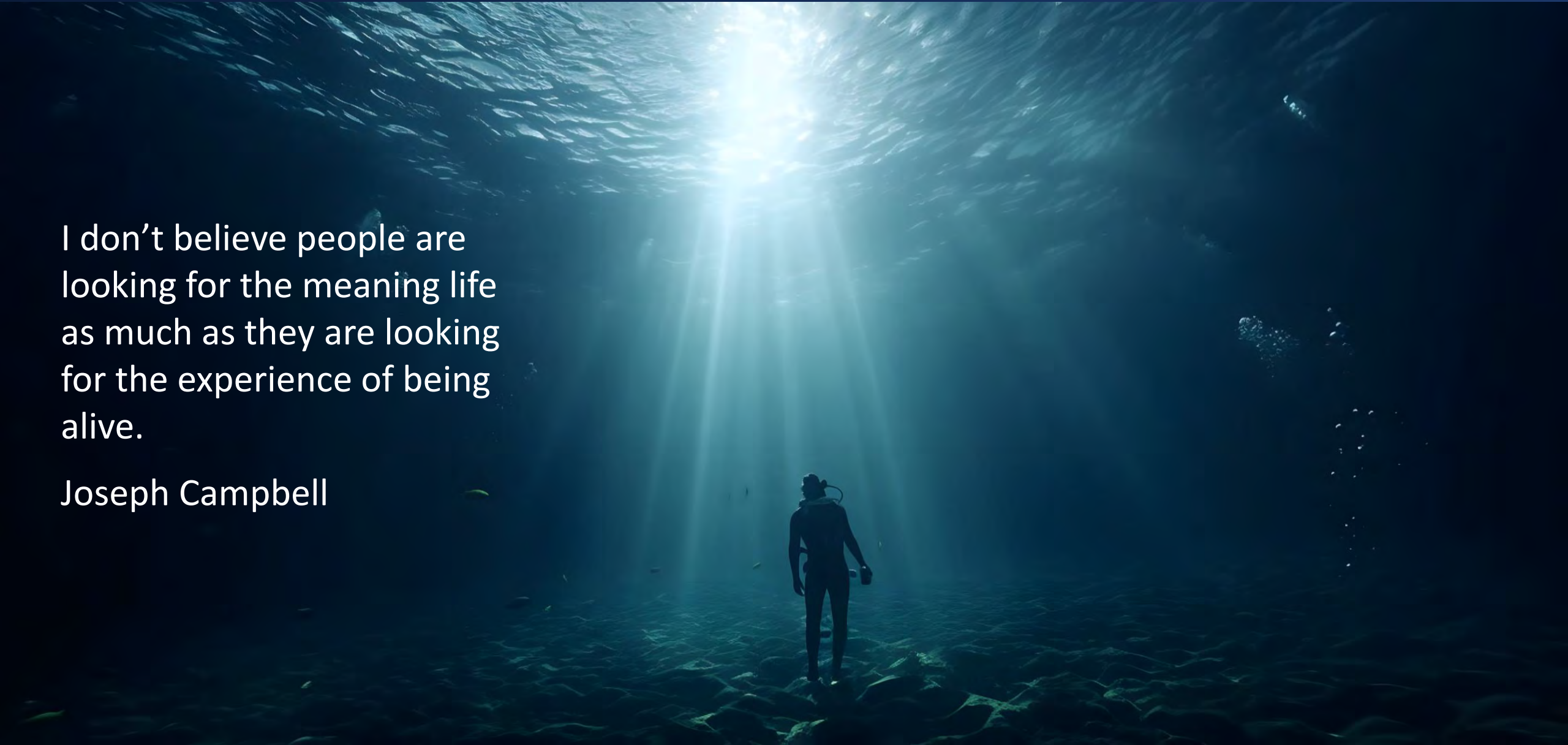
Antidote: Embodied Flow (Presencing)



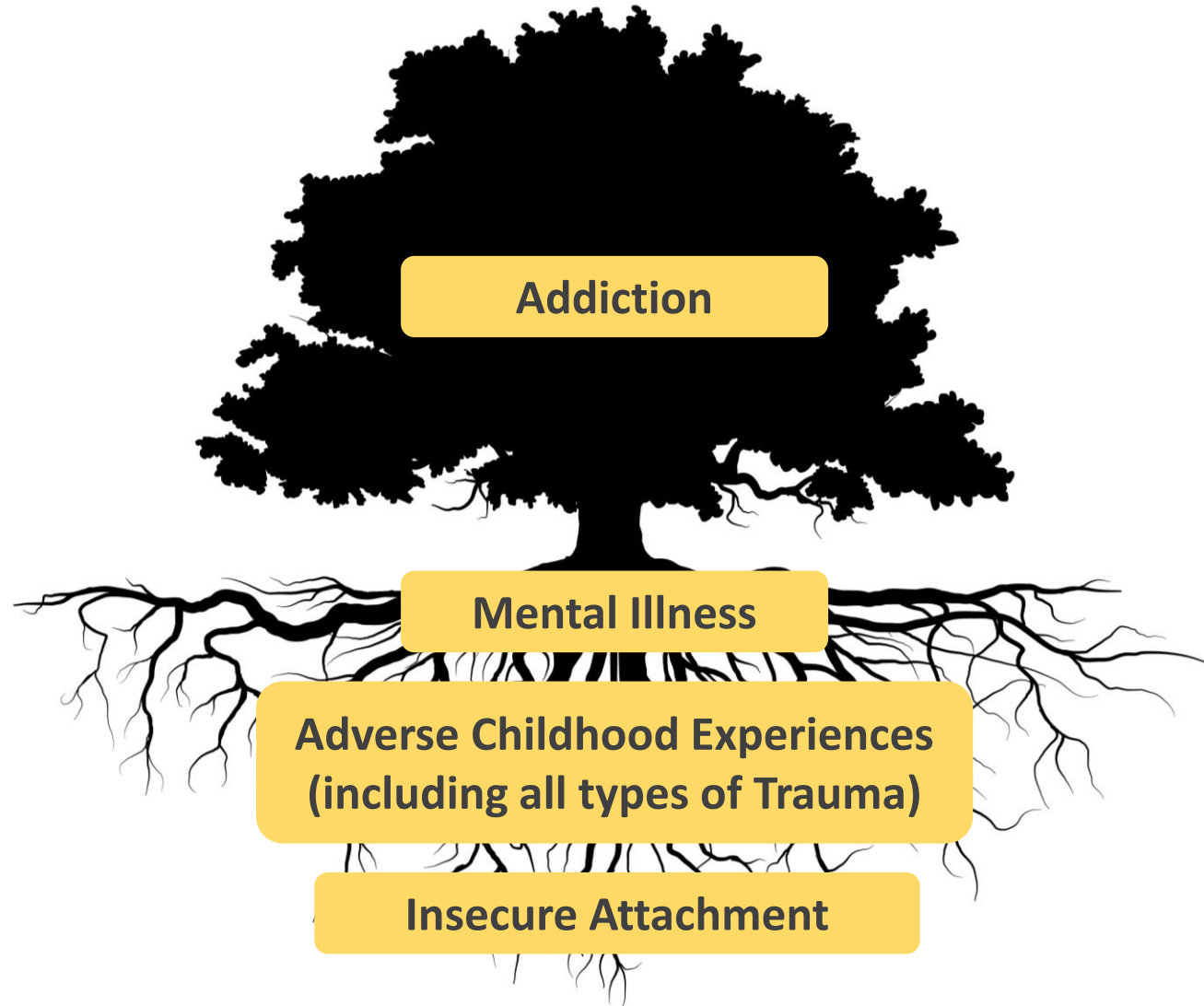
Embodied Living

I don't believe people are looking for the meaning life as much as they are looking for the experience of being alive.

Joseph Campbell



How to Live in Flow, to be Embodied?



Developmental Capacities for Embodied Living

Stage 1: Security and the Ability to Look, Listen, and be Calm

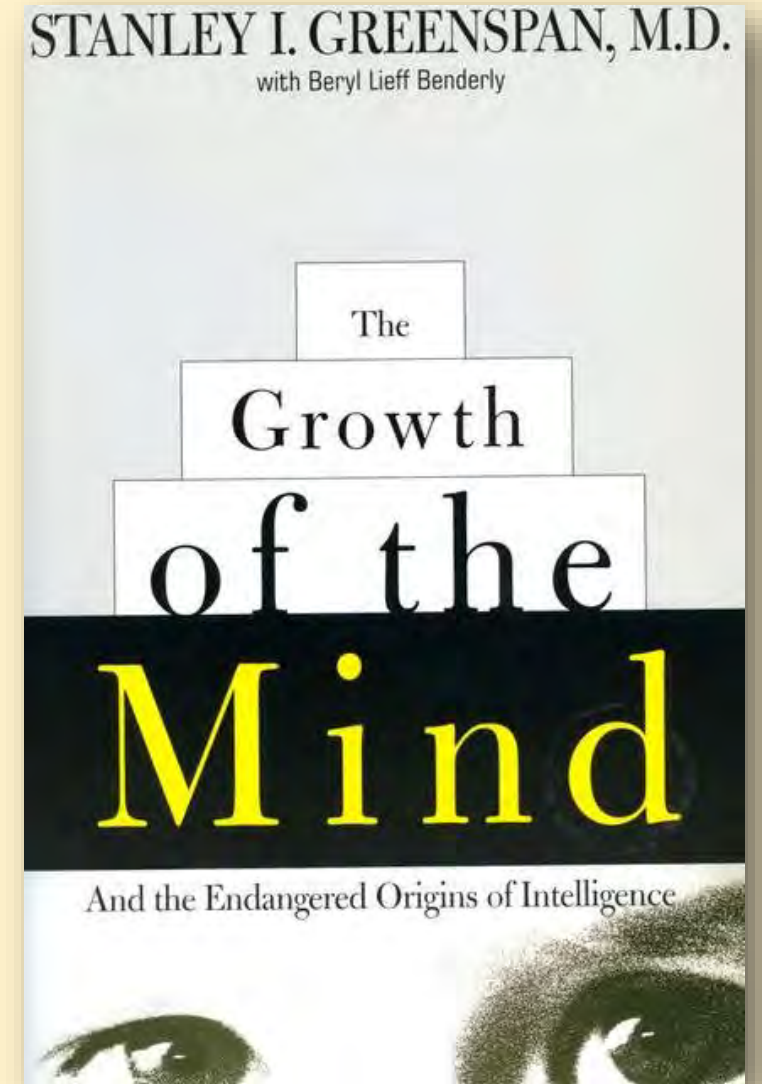
Stage 2: Relating: The ability to Feel Warm and Close to Others

Stage 3: Intentional Two-Way Communication Without Words

Stage 4: Solving Problems and Forming a Sense of Self

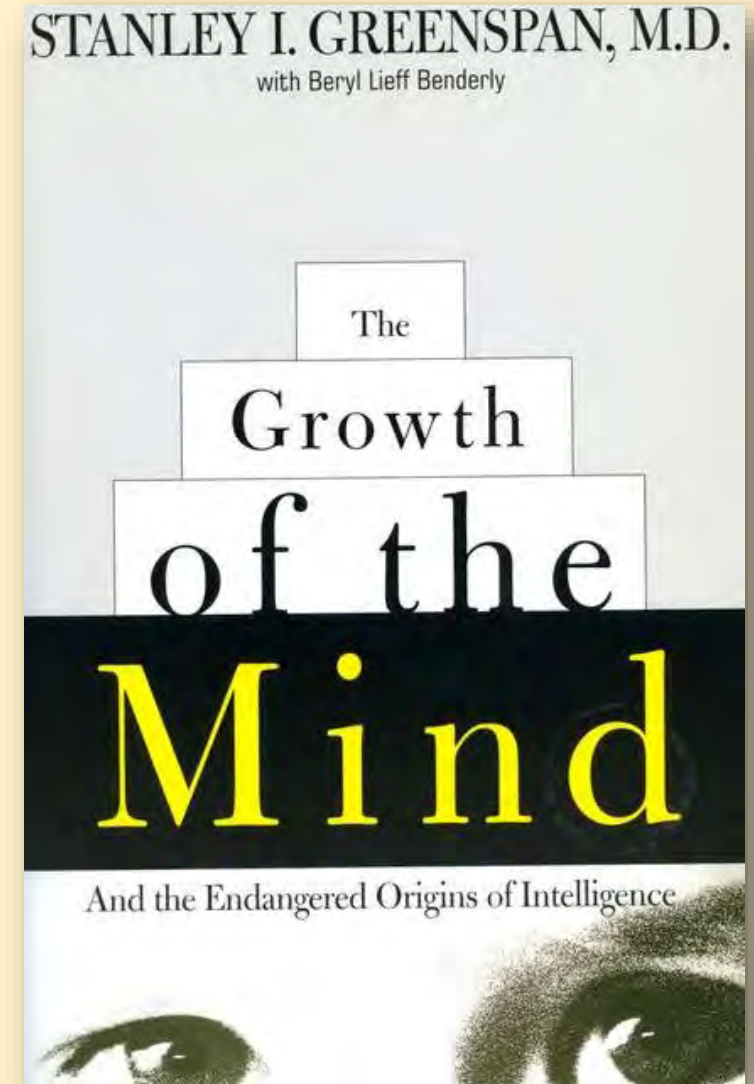
Stage 5: Creating and Elaborating Emotional Ideas

Stage 6: Emotional Thinking



Developmental Capacities for Embodied Living

If we view a person as a collection of traits driven by biological mechanisms, we may be content simply to use neurological research to engineer better adjusted human machines. If, however, mental health is defined by a person's mastery of a series of developmental tasks – the acquisition of the capacity to reflect, to relate deeply to others, and to regard others with empathy in the face of stress or change – **we will insist on the importance of intimate interpersonal experiences and emotional growth.**



The path to riches...

It doesn't matter what we have accomplished, what recognition we have received, what we own; there is **nothing as sweet as loving** – not necessarily being loved, but just loving. The more we love – the more people, the more manifestations of life we love – the richer we are.

Kabir Helminski
The Knowing Heart



Back where we started... In summary



- Hypernormalization may be a useful way to understand how we feel about life today
- Life deludes us into feeling separate and disconnected, particularly when the left hemisphere becomes the master
- The antidote to hypernormalization and addiction is embodiment, living in flow, connecting with our true nature and the essence of life... and there are many paths to help us do this

A serene winter night scene featuring a snow-covered landscape. Several evergreen trees are heavily laden with snow and are illuminated from below by warm, glowing lights, creating a soft, ethereal atmosphere. The sky is dark, and numerous snowflakes are captured in mid-fall, adding a sense of movement and depth to the scene. The overall color palette is dominated by cool blues and purples, contrasted with the warm yellow and orange tones of the lights.

Now your turn... thoughts?